



NEWS RELEASE

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Modesto Clinic Owner Arrested in Veterinary Medical Board Probe

Former Veterinarian Who Lost License in 1988 Faces Felony Animal Cruelty Charge

SACRAMENTO – An investigation by the California Department of Consumer Affairs' Veterinary Medical Board (VMB) has led to the arrest of the owner of a Modesto clinic on charges of animal cruelty, theft and practicing veterinary medicine without a license.

Mahmoud Ahmed Kalil, the owner of the Pelandale Veterinary Hospital whose license to practice veterinary medicine was revoked in 1988, was arrested July 12 at the clinic by officials of the Stanislaus District Attorney's Office and the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) Division of Investigation. He was released on bail the same day.

"This case is a great example of state and local authorities working together to protect consumers and bring criminal charges when warranted. Mr. Kalil has been a continuing problem and I applaud the VMB's action," said DCA Director Charlene Zettel.

The charges against Mr. Kalil stem from a nearly a dozen complaints from consumers. The animal cruelty charge, a felony, stems from an allegation that Mr. Kalil burned a growth off a dog's eye last year using nitrogen strips. The dog's eye was burned by the strip, but was successfully treated by another veterinarian.

"Having lost his license nearly 20 years ago, Mr. Kalil is in effect a layperson and should not be performing any kind of procedure on an animal in the first place," said Sue Geranen, the Executive Officer of the VMB.

The two other charges against Mr. Kalil are misdemeanors. The theft charge was made because the investigation found that he charged consumers for veterinary services that he performed without a license.

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The arrest marks the second time that Mr. Kalil has run afoul of California authorities. In 1988, he was put on probation and his veterinary medical license revoked after he was convicted in Solano County Superior Court of six counts of both animal cruelty and theft. The conviction was dismissed in 1991 after he successfully completed probation. The VMB, however, denied Mr. Kalil's petition that year to reinstate his license to practice veterinary medicine. A second bid for reinstatement in 2003 was also denied by the Board.

Under California law, anyone may own a licensed veterinary clinic so long as a managing, licensed veterinarian is on staff. That person is ultimately responsible for the clinic's operations.

The VMB is looking into Pelandale Veterinary Hospital to see if the managing veterinarian there might have violated state regulations.

The mission of the Department of Consumer Affairs' VMB is to provide protection for consumers and animals through proper licensing of veterinarians and registered veterinary technicians, and through vigorous, objective enforcement of the California Veterinary Practice Act. Learn more on the Board's Web site at www.vmb.ca.gov.

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